


Missouri Housing Trust Fund Awards Announced

The annual competition for funding from the Missouri Housing Trust Fund ([MHTF](#)) ended on December 31st, 2009, with the announcement of the awardees for 2010. The Notice of Funds Available was posted on the Missouri Housing Development Commission's ([MHDC](#)) Web site on June 1st and applications were due on September 11, 2009. The NOFA indicated that an estimated \$3 million would be available from the Trust Fund; the total number of applications MHDC received amounted to over \$15 million. A total of \$4,506,904.18 was awarded to dozens of agencies throughout the State of Missouri in amounts ranging from \$1000 to \$350,000. [A complete list of the MHTF awards](#) is available at MHDC's Web site.

The Trust Fund is supported by a \$3 recording fee on all real estate documents filed in the State of Missouri, and in more prosperous times the Trust Fund's value has been in the neighborhood of \$6 million. 2010's Fund of \$4.5 million is understandably low, considering the problems in the housing market, but well above the comparatively dismal figure provided in the NOFA.

State law requires that at least half of the funds awarded annually through the MHTF be used to assist persons whose income is at or below 25 percent of their area median income (AMI)—a lower threshold than HUD's definition of "very low income," which is 30 percent of AMI. All Trust Fund awards must target persons at or below 50 percent of AMI. This year, homeless prevention accounted for the largest portion of the total amount awarded at \$2,155,307.40, or slightly less than 48 percent of the total. Awards for construction and rehabilitation of new or existing housing amounted to \$893,659 or just under 20 percent. Awards to provide matching funds for grant-funded projects (such as those commonly required in HUD homeless assistance grants) totaled \$820,094.03, or 18 percent of the total. Home repair funds accounted for about 10 percent at \$444,000 and rental assistance was funded at \$193,843.75, or slightly over four percent.

Among the largest individual awards made were \$350,000 to [Saints Joachim and Ann Care Service](#) in St. Charles for homeless prevention activities; \$180,000 to the [Harry S. Truman Community Development Corporation](#) in Webb City for home repair; \$167,160 to [Hope House](#) in Independence for construction of new housing; and \$215,590 to [Phoenix Programs](#) in Columbia for construction, homeless prevention and for match funds. 

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Ten Energy Saving Tips for Renters

Renters have less responsibility for their power consumption situation than homeowners, but they also have less flexibility when it comes to making changes to reduce their costs. For people in assisted rental housing such as the 1400 households statewide served by DMH's 30 Shelter Plus Care programs, keeping the costs of energy use down can be of vital concern. These tips from [Energy Star](#), a joint program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy, can help renters to reduce their costs

1. Lighting is one of the easiest places to start saving energy. Replacing your five most frequently used light fixtures or the bulbs in them with energy-efficient lights can save more than \$65 a year in energy costs. Compact fluorescent light bulbs provide high-quality light output, use 75% less energy, and last six to ten times longer than standard incandescent light bulbs.
 - Remember to always turn off your lights when leaving a room. Turning off just one 60-watt incandescent bulb that would otherwise burn eight hours a day can save about \$15 per year.
2. If you're considering purchasing a room air conditioner, buy an Energy Star-qualified model. They use at least 10 percent less energy than standard models.
 - In the winter, insulate room air conditioners from the outside with a tight-fitting unit cover, available at your local home improvement center or hardware store. This keeps heated air from escaping outside. Alternately, you can remove the window unit in the winter months to prevent energy losses.
 - Be sure the window unit fits tightly in the window so outdoor air is not getting in.
3. If possible, install a programmable thermostat to automatically adjust your home's temperature settings when you're away or sleeping. A programmable thermostat is surprisingly easy to install and can be done by anyone.
 - When used properly, a programmable thermostat with its multiple temperature settings can save up to \$150 a year in energy costs. Proper use means setting the thermostat at energy-saving temperatures without overriding that setting. You should also set the "hold" button at a constant energy-saving temperature when you're away or on vacation.
4. Consumer electronics play an increasingly large role in your home's energy consumption, accounting for 15 percent of household electricity use. Many consumer electronics products use energy even when switched off. Electronics equipment that has earned the Energy Star rating helps save energy when off, while maintaining features like clock displays, channel settings and remote-control functions.



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- Unplug your cell phone charger and any other battery chargers or power adapters when not in use.
 - Use a power strip as a central “turn off” point when you are done using equipment.
 - Even when turned off, electronic and computer equipment often use a small amount of electricity. This phantom power load can range from a few watts to as much as 20 or even 40 watts for each piece of equipment. Using a power strip for your computer and all peripheral equipment allows you to completely disconnect the power supply from the power source, eliminating standby power consumption.
5. A low-flow shower head uses less energy and less water a standard shower head.
 - With an older showerhead, you could be using as much as 5.5 gallons of hot water per minute; with a new low-flow showerhead, you’ll be using 2.5 gallons per minute and saving \$145 each year on the cost of heating your water. Showerheads are easy to remove and replace, so anyone can make this do-it-yourself improvement.
 6. Make sure all air registers are clear of furniture so that air can circulate freely. If your home has radiators, place heat-resistant reflectors between radiators and walls. In the winter, this will help heat the room instead of the wall.
 7. During cold weather, take advantage of the sun's warmth by keeping drapes open during daylight hours. To keep out the heat of the summer sun, close window shades and drapes in warm weather.
 8. If you have a dishwasher, save water by scraping dishes instead of rinsing them before loading in the dishwasher. Run your dishwasher with a full load and use the air-dry option if available.
 - Rinsing dirty dishes before loading your dishwasher uses a lot of water and energy. Most dishwashers today can thoroughly clean dishes that have had food scraped, rather than rinsed, off — the wash cycle and detergent take care of the rest. To make the most efficient use of your dishwasher's energy and water consumption, run the dishwasher only when enough dirty dishes have accumulated for a full load.
 9. Wash your laundry with cold water whenever possible. To save water, try to wash full loads or, if you must wash a partial load, reduce the level of water appropriately.
 - Hot water heating accounts for about 90 percent of the energy used to wash clothes; only 10 percent goes to electricity used by the washer motor. Depending on the hardness of your local water quality, you may be able to do laundry exclusively with cold water, using cold water laundry detergents. Switching to cold water can save the



Governor's Committee to End Homelessness Installs 2010 Slate of Officers

[The Governor's Committee to End Homelessness](#)

elected a slate of new officers in late 2009.

Outgoing Chair Denise Heet, of the Columbia Veterans' Hospital, turned over the Committee's guidance to the new Chairperson, Sandy Wilson. Sandy is Director of HMIS and Special Projects at the [Missouri Association for Social Welfare](#), and has worked for MASW on HMIS and homelessness issues since 2006.




Anthony Smith, Director of Housing and Vocational Services for [Family Counseling Center](#) in Kennett, and a long-time partner with DMH in housing and homelessness issues, was chosen as the new Vice-Chairperson. Heather Bradley-Geary, Trust Fund and Community Initiatives Manager at [Missouri Housing Development Commission](#), is the Committee's Secretary. Liz Hagar-Mace, Housing Director at the [Department of Mental Health](#), is the Committee's Historian. 

average household using an electric water heater more than \$40 annually, and more than \$30 annually if using a gas water heater.

- Washing full loads can save you more than 3,400 gallons of water each year.

10. Don't over dry your clothes. If your dryer has a moisture sensor that will automatically turn the machine off when clothes are done, use it to avoid over drying. Remember to clean the lint trap before every load. Dry full loads, or reduce drying time for partial loads.

- It's easy to over dry your clothes, if one setting is used for various fabric types. Try to dry loads made up of similar fabrics, so the entire load dries just as the cycle ends. Many dryers come with energy-saving moisture or humidity sensors that shut off the heat when the clothes are dry. If you don't have this feature, try to match the cycle length to the size and weight of the load. A dryer operating an extra 15 minutes per load can cost you up to \$34, every year.
- The lint trap is an important energy saver. Dryers work by moving heated air through wet clothes, evaporating and then venting water vapor outside. If the dryer cannot provide enough heat, or move air sufficiently through the clothes, they will take longer to dry, and may not dry at all. One of the easiest things you can do to increase drying efficiency is to clean the lint trap before each and every load. This step also can save you up to \$34 each year. 

DMH Housing Seeks to Expand Shelter Plus Care Coverage

With [30 operational Shelter Plus Care grants](#) from HUD in place, DMH Housing is providing rental assistance for persons with mental health disabilities and their families in Missouri counties that encompass the majority of the state's population. Shelter Plus Care assistance has been available in the Kansas City and St. Louis metropolitan areas for over 15 years now, but as these areas have grown and expanded, the need for assistance has grown as well.

For this reason, in the 2009 competition for HUD Continuum of Care funds, DMH Housing applied for new grants to add Shelter Plus Care coverage to the counties surrounding the state's two biggest metropolitan areas. If the grants are awarded, Shelter Plus Care will be formally added to Jefferson and Franklin Counties, which are south and west of St. Louis County, and in Lafayette, Cass and Ray Counties, which are east, south and northeast of Jackson County, respectively.


DMH Housing also applied for new grants to expand program availability within the metro counties themselves. New grant applications to house chronically homeless persons were made for Jackson and St. Louis Counties, in addition to a grant for




DMH Home Ownership Initiative for People With Developmental Disabilities

[DMH's Division of Developmental Disabilities](#)

is launching an initiative to assist up to 20 people to purchase their own homes. Five contracts have been awarded to community-based organizations who will act as a "support broker" to help participants access financial counseling, explore financing options, locate affordable properties and apply for a mortgage. The contractors are the

[Northeast Missouri Community Action Corporation](#) in Bowling Green, [4-Sight Counseling](#) in Cape Girardeau, [On My Own in Nevada](#), the [Center for Human Services in Sedalia](#), and the [Coalition for Independence in Kansas City](#). The experiences of the contractors and participants will be included in a report to be used as a training resource for other support brokers who wish to specialize in housing. For more information, contact [Robin Rust](#), Project Director for DD Systems Transformation, at 573-751-8209. 

homeless families in St. Louis County. If successful, these new grants will add funding for 21 new units in the Kansas City area and 29 in the St. Louis area. As of February 2, 2010, all 23 of DMH Housing's applications to renew existing grants had been granted, and news from HUD on applications for new projects is expected any day. 

Mental Health Champions Chosen; DMH Housing Nominee Wins Again!

The Department of Mental Health recently announced the results of the Mental Health Champions initiative for 2010, and for the third year in a row a person nominated by DMH Housing staff has won the award. Mental Health Champions recognition was begun in 2008 as a way to raise awareness about the successes of Missourians who work to overcome the challenges and obstacles of mental illness, substance abuse and gambling addiction, and developmental disabilities. The three people chosen by DMH for this recognition have not only conquered those challenges but in so doing have given back to their communities and made them better places to live.

The winner in the substance abuse category, **Earl Cobbins, Sr.**, was nominated by Pat Brown of the DMH Housing Staff. Because of addiction and mental illness, Earl had lost everything important in his life—home, family and job. He received help for recovery at Swope Health Services and also received rental assistance from DMH through one of several Shelter Plus Care grants the department has in the Kansas City area. Eventually, Earl was able to stabilize his life, pay for his own housing, and regain the support of his family and friends. He realized that one of the most critical elements to his recovery was housing, and has since formed a not-for-profit organization called Sober 1 House of Hope. Sober 1 provides not only supported housing but job training and employment opportunities at Earl's car dealership and repair shop.

Gary Stevens was chosen for recognition in the category of developmental disabilities. Gary has been a strong advocate for all people with developmental disabilities for many years and has been an integral part of numerous boards, commissions, work groups and committees locally and statewide. While a member of the Missouri Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities, Gary helped move forward initiatives that increase self determination; help people reduce or eliminate guardianship; find a home of their own; and live, work and play in the community of their choice.

Jim Pace has demonstrated exemplary courage and commitment to overcoming the challenges of his mental illness and making life better for others in his community. Through his recovery and participation at the Independence Center, Jim now works in a permanent full-time job and has moved up to a supervisor position. He no longer lives on disability payments, but rather finds great pride in



SOAR: Helping Consumers Access SSI and SSDI the First Time Around

SOAR stands for “SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery” and is a technical assistance and strategic planning initiative designed, ultimately, to increase access by homeless disabled persons to Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). Because qualifying for these benefits also generally qualifies eligible persons for Medicare or Medicaid, the impact on the lives of homeless disabled people can be enormous.

According to SOAR’s Web site, the normal first-time success rate for SSI/SSDI applications is only 10-15 percent. Averaged over results obtained in 32 states using the SOAR model, the 2009 application success rate “soared” to 71% in over 4300 decisions.

Missouri is not included in the 2009 statistics, but SOAR training is available and ongoing now in our state. The next available training is in Kansas City on March 23-24, 2010. For more information, contact [Kendra Daniels](#), LPC and Team Leader at Truman Medical Center’s Assertive Community Outreach at 816-404-6321 or by email. Comprehensive data about the SOAR initiative is available at this [Web site](#).



being able to live on his own and even contribute financially to his church and other charitable organizations. He volunteers to speak at various occupational therapy classes at Washington University and is a regular panelist in the Crisis Intervention Training course for local law enforcement officers. Jim has provided valuable insight into mental illness to thousands and is an inspiration to many.

The Mental Health Champions will be honored at a dinner hosted by the Missouri Mental Health Foundation in Jefferson City on April 7, 2010. Each awardee will receive a \$1000 cash prize as well as an overnight hotel stay with a guest. To make reservations for the awards dinner or to become a sponsor of the event, [see this document](#) at the Missouri Department of Mental Health’s Web site.

Well Worth Watching: Recovery Support Services Video

The Department of Mental Health’s Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse has posted a new video on the DMH Web site about the importance of recovery support services in Missouri. The production was made in partnership with the Missouri Institute of Mental Health. It’s billed internally as an informational video, but in fact the stories told by the people who appear in it are compelling and often heart-rending. In this sense the video is not just informational, but awareness-raising as well. It’s hard to stereotype people with addictions, and the people who try to help them, when you see them speak like this about their experiences. All of which serves well DMH’s on-going efforts to address the issue of stigma in serving populations with mental health issues. As you might expect, housing and homelessness are threads running throughout the piece.



To view the video, [go the DMH main Web site page](#) and look for the “Recovery Support Services Video” link at the top of the page. Clicking the link opens your default media player.

